

Testimony of Theodore “Ted” J. Garrish
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy
at the U.S. Department of Energy
Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
April 30, 2025

Chairman Lee, Ranking Member Heinrich, Members of the Committee, and Professional Staff, thank you for the opportunity to appear today as the Nominee for the position of Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. It is an honor to appear before the Committee and I appreciate the confidence President Trump and Secretary Wright have shown in nominating me for this role.

First, I would like to introduce my family here today—my wife Dory Stacks who is my strength and support as I embark on this important task.

My career has largely been devoted to energy, mainly in the field of nuclear energy. And much of my time has been spent devoted to public service, largely at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), originally as General Counsel and later as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy and also in Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, and most recently as Assistant Secretary for International Affairs.

In addition, I served as the Federal Inspector of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System and as a member of the President’s Commission on Catastrophic Nuclear Accidents (Price-Anderson Commission).

Throughout my career, I have worked closely with this Committee, I can remember many late nights working with professional staff and Senators assisting with legislative efforts. I had the opportunity to serve as Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy in the late 1980’s. The position was organized differently at the time and nuclear energy faced different challenges than it does today. Today we are on the threshold of making nuclear a significant contributor to our nation’s energy future and making a true comeback for this important source of affordable and reliable electricity and to become a source of industrial heat for chemical production, mining and other uses.

While in the private sector, my time was spent heavily on nuclear projects, and notably I often worked with “newcomer” nuclear countries helping them to develop their programs, talent and expertise consistent with the IAEA programs for new nuclear nations.

Let me briefly give you my vision on some of the important work that I will hope to achieve if I have the privilege of confirmation. First and foremost, as soon as feasible we need to build a

new reactor, both large or small (Small Modular Reactor or micro). It is important to proceed with the development of advanced reactors and their licensing and siting. Nuclear offers an extraordinary capacity to meet the coming increased electricity demand in a reliable, affordable and safe way. This is important and we need to get on with building the next generation of nuclear plants.

Second, development of robust domestic enrichment industry is essential for our national security, and we must conduct a realistic evaluation of our current system under development and determine if our current methodology will work and whether additional actions are required. Third, we should evaluate the status of the international market for US nuclear developers and supply chains overseas to ensure that we maintain strong positioning for US products and services and build the long-term relationships needed for US companies building upon our strong nuclear culture overseas with the highest standards of non-proliferation. We should consider the further use of Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA's) to promote our US interests.

Finally, we need to begin to resolve the nuclear waste dilemma and work with Congress, communities and States on solutions.

If confirmed, it would be my honor to work cooperatively with the Congress, and especially this Committee on achieving these and other objectives. Hopefully, I can contribute to the development of this important energy source.

Again, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear today. If confirmed, look forward to working with the members of this committee and members of the staff in furthering the interests of nuclear energy for the benefits of the United States.